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L I N E S

WRITTEN AT

T W I C K E N H A M, &c.

[Price One Shilling.]

1. I. N. S.

WRITTEN AT

1. W. I. C. E. N. H. A. M.

[P. O. S.]

L I N E S

WRITTEN AT

T W I C K E N H A M.

BY

D. O' B R Y E N.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR J. DEBRETT, OPPOSITE BURLINGTON
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WRITTEN AT

T W I C K E N H A M

L O N D O N

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1911

TO LADY BASSETT.

MADAM,

ALTHOUGH the following lines
(with the story of which your ladyship is well acquainted)
may fail to contribute either to the writer's reputation,
or the reader's pleasure, there is one certain satisfaction
resulting to the author from their publication; namely—
the testimony it thus affords him to give of his respect
for your Ladyship, and the opportunity he derives from
the honor of inscribing this little poem to your name,
of publickly assuring you, that he is in the most strict
and genuine sense

Your Ladyship's

most obedient and faithfull,

humble Servant,

D. O'BRYEN.

London, August 11th, 1788.

6

THE following poem (if it deserve the name of poem) was excited by a conversation at the house of the amiable lady to whom it is inscribed, on the evening of the 29th of last June at Twickenham; and was written in the course of *that night* and by the noon of the *day after*.

IF the hurry in which a work is executed could be any excuse for its imperfection, it would be at least as good a reason for its total suppression. The motive to publish is the hope to please; and a writer in attempting to palliate his defects may indeed discover his weakness, but will seldom subdue his reader's stubbornness, or justify his own presumption in addressing the world, if he fails to accomplish that first and greatest object.

NO

NO man is more aware of these truths than the author of these lines; even at the moment he ventures to send forth a composition written in *less than half a day*, and perhaps abounding with the blemishes, almost inseparable from any thing *so* executed.

“ *Yet why then publish ?* ”

—THE lame and feeble answer is, “ *the request of friends !* ”

AND if that reply should rescue the author from all suspicion that his vanity prompted him to this publication, the end of this address is gained; for he assures the reader, that nothing but the opinion of persons respectable for every thing except their partiality to him, could have induced him to *yield* to the printing of lines, of whose merit no one can entertain a more moderate opinion than the man who wrote them !

LINES,

L I N E S, &c.

I N this sweet season, and this chearful scene,
Where gaudy villas deck the cultur'd green ;
Where *Richmond's* slope reflected lustre throws,
And *Thames* in mild majestic current flows ;
—The cool recess of *Twick'nam's* hallow'd shade, 5
Twick'nam, by poets lays immortal made !

HERE clust'ring boughs in fragrant foliage bloom,
And breathe the blessings of the rich perfume ;

C

Here

Here birds on balmy branches chirp around,
Each gale a nosegay, and a song each sound ; 10
In leafy pride shine every shrub and flow'r,
And earth impregnate tells the teeming hour,
Each object smiling with the smiling day,
All nature laughs, and all the world looks gay.

NOW youth puts on a more enliv'ning face, 15
And heav'nly beauty beams with brighter grace ;
All images of *good* more fair appear,
And those of *ill*, less savage and severe ;
Flint-hearted av'rice seems t'expand his mind,
And hesitate for once to sponge his kind ; 20
Oppression lingers at encreasing pain,
And persecution scarce will tie the chain ;
Disease forgets his pang, and grief his groan,
And age and want the sacred season own ;

The

The rough grow soft—the stern are forc'd to smile, 25
 Malice to melt, and passion pause awhile;
 Revenge and pride and rancour seem to cease,
 And turn to love and gentleness and peace;
 Sharp sorrow steals a fleeting hour from woes,
 And dulness self sweet inspiration knows ! 30

SMIT with the scene ev'n *I* attempt to sing
 “ Albeit unused to the” sounding string,
 Long sunder'd from the arts my soul approv'd,
 Cold to the muse that once with warmth I lov'd,
 Doom'd still to bear what giddy fortune brings, 35
 And toil through ev'ry bustle as it springs,
 Ev'n *I* affect the Bard—though words may fail
 To paint the mountain and the flow'ry vale ;
 But not to lyric thoughts alone inclin'd,
 The scene prompts charity to all mankind ; 40

Those

Those whom I love appear with brighter spirit,
 And those *not* lov'd have strangely gain'd some merit;
Thurlow seems mild and good, and *Richmond* brave,
Rolle is no fool, and *Robinson* no knave,
Kenyon has much of *North's* luxuriant mirth, 45
 And *Pitt* the thousandth part of *Portland's* worth,
 Intricate *Lansdown* merits public trust,
 And callous *Impey's* merciful and just.

BUT peace to these,—and let us taste delight,
 Where softer themes and better names invite, 50
 At lib'ral *Bassett's* hospitable board—
 Where social joys their kindred bliss afford;
 There sense and pleasure run in mingled flow,
 And all is meant for comfort—not for show—
 There wealth's expended not to plague, but please, 55
 And ev'ry man who comes is at his ease:

Rich

Rich without glitter—without flaring gay—

Disgustful pomp and listless form away !

LO !—where the master heals the bleeding land,

Red with the ravage of a barb'rous hand ; 60

Not from the frantic schemes of mad caprice,

But a worse cause !—from impious avarice !

—The place in mournful ruin lay—despoil'd

Of all that fancy plann'd, and labour toil'd,

The pride and ornament of shades and bowers, 65

Sunk in the * common sepulchre of flowers ;

When *Bassett* came, and with restoring arm,

Renew'd the beauty, and reviv'd the charm,

* Sir *Francis Bassett's* predecessor in this property disrobed the villa of many of its best ornaments, and sold them at Covent Garden.

Call'd into life the shrub, the grove, the spring,
And spread the face of joy o'er ev'ry thing ! 70

THUS to compare the little with the great,
The mistress of the world has felt her fate ;
Whate'er made *Rome* the glory of her days,
And rais'd her mighty men to endless praise ;
The martial flames that bade her spirit rise, 75
The softer arts that mend and moralize ;
The gorgeous show of conquer'd nations spoils,
Sad fruits of statesmens skill, and heroes toils !
Empires subdu'd and crowns of princes hurl'd,
The glittering trophies of the subject world ! 80
Stupendous mass ! the wonder of each age !
All sunk beneath the savage *Vandal's* rage,
In one, wide, dreadful, desolation lay,
Till science sprung and brush'd the cloud away ;

Form,

Form, line, and grace, from out the *Chaos* start, 85
 The rescu'd relicks of celestial art;
 Another reign of *Roman* greatness came,
 Of less renown, but more innoxious fame:
 The art that knits the arch, the column rears,
 And shields the beauty from the crush of years; 90
 On the dim stone the striking charm to trace,
 And send to future time the form and face;
 To scan the semblance when the scene is o'er,
 Death to subdue, and live when life's no more:
 Thus with less lustre but with lasting fame, 95
 She grew a mirror of her ancient name!

FAR distant be the day e'er *Britain* knows
 The sad revolve of *Rome's* lamented woes,
 And yet devouring time that levels all
 May shortly see this mighty fabric fall, 100

Each

Each source to us of bliss, and pride, and joy
 The wasteful hand of years may soon destroy :
Burke who sends ev'ry good to ev'ry clime !
 And *Sheridan*, the wonder of the time !
 (Names that on fame's eternal wing shall fly 105
 When all their foes are wrapt in infamy ;)
 Yet these may feel of vulgar men the lot,
 Perhaps ev'n *Fox* himself may be forgot !

OH ! had the bard, who, erst these shades among,
 Made *Twick'nam* sacred in immortal song, 110
 But heard our matchless *Fox* at Virtue's call
 (Before whose name a hundred St. Johns fall)
 And seen that spirit rise—those thunders roll,
 Which curb the proud, and shake the guilty foul.
 How would *he* paint the rich, the rapid tide 115
 That drags ev'n vice for once to virtue's side ;

That

That shames corruption's self, and pierces fore
 The *callous breast* that never felt before;
 That eagle glance that shoots through ev'ry part,
 And strikes the latent vileness of the heart ; 120
 The skill that fences liberty from ill,
 Both from the croud's caprice, and tyrant's will ;
 Th' extensive grasp that *Europe's* interest shares,
 And in one view collects the world's affairs ;
 With all the pow'rs that mark the man design'd 125
 To guide the great concerns of human kind.—
 —Or—if he trace him to the private shade,
 Where the true genius of the heart's display'd ;
 He, who resists, though the whole earth combin'd,
 When the big matter suits his mighty mind, 130
 In life's low cares is borne by ev'ry tide,
 The humblest rule him, and a child may guide ;

E

Though

Though firm, yet yielding—soft, but never weak
 The first to listen, and the last to speak !
 Pleas'd to discuss whatever prompts the strong ! 135
 Reas'ning with all, and never in the wrong !
 Skill'd to adorn each point with light and grace
 And yet the first to give another place ;
 At once the greatest, and the mildest mind !
 Born to conciliate, or command mankind ! ! 140

—SURE were the Bard *such* virtues to recite
 Ev'n *Pope* must tow'r above each former flight.
 Though *Nile* less rich, and *Thames* less clearly shines
 Than the pure current of his golden lines ;
 Though ev'ry grace of numbers glides along, 145
 In all the liquid luxury of song,
 And force and light, and strength our wonder raise
 And ev'ry rare felicity of phrase,

—Yet

—Yet still transcending all his former fame
 Would flow the verse that swell'd with *Fox's* name. 150

What though no bard exist to sing these times,
 When poetry's extinct,—except in rhimes—

Yet *gen'ral good* is fame—beyond the meed
 Of verse itself—the honor is the deed—!

—Go on, Illustrious Man!—and *there* be prais'd 155
 For *that bright page*—whence nothing is eras'd;

The *Indian* rescued from oppression's plan,

From the red lash the wett'ring *African*,

That in his pious mosque, and peaceful lands,

This in his fable love, and sultry sands, 160

Redeem'd to nature's rights will pant to blefs

The pow'rs unknown that lift them from distress—

—Go on—to justice, wisdom, virtue true

And let your glory be the good you do!

—Shew—'tis a blasphemy that custom should 165

Place right in mortal to another's blood,

That:

That social bands no civil comforts draw
 From human clemency—but from the *law*,
 That man o'er man by fraud exalted, grows
 The very worst of ills, existence knows, 170
 That tis our first great care in ev'ry hour
 To curb,—wherever plac'd,—the growth of power—
 And spread this truth o'er ev'ry land and sea
 Man *must be happy*—if he will be *free*?

F I N I S.

ERRATUM—Page 16, line 5, for “shall” read “should.”